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AUTHOR Ogbondah, Chris; Siddens, Paul J., III
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ABSTRACT

Drum language, gong language, masquerades, and puppet theater, the traditional forms of communication found in Nigerian culture, reflect tensions that exist between oral and literate cultures. Drum language ranges from simple signals to elaborately coded messages and is learned through both formal and informal educational processes. Formal training for drum language is conducted at various levels. Since there is no direct correlation between the sounds created by the drum and specific letters of the alphabet, it is by definition a form of nonverbal communication. Gong language, as a form of drum language, is based upon tonal patterns that reproduce or replicate the human voice. Masquerades are carved images of humans, animals, or imagined creatures. The masks or carved images are worn by individuals adorned and decorated with colorful apparels. The nonverbal communication skills of masquerades are learned formally during rehearsals in the evenings. Another form of nonverbal communication used by the Masquerade is kinesics, the science and study of movement. Like masquerades, members of a puppetry troupe formally learn the art of puppetry. Puppetry is used for entertainment as well as to communicate news, information, and other serious messages. It relies on the same forms of nonverbal communication that the Masquerade does to communicate its messages. The roots of these traditional forms of nonverbal communication provide insights into how these forms of communication function and how they are interpreted both within and outside Nigerian culture. (RS)

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DEFINING TRADITIONAL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION IN NIGERIAN CULTURE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Chris Ogbondah, Ph.D.
Professor of Journalism
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0357
319-273-5913
Chris.Ogbondah@UNI.EDU

and

Paul J. Siddens III, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Communication Studies
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0357
319-273-5898
Paul.Siddens@UNI.EDU

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Introduction

There exist in our world cultures based on orality (the spoken word), and cultures based on literacy (the written word). Walter J. Ong very clearly points out in his book, Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word (1982), that there are specific differences in how these two types of cultures think and express themselves. Even though oral cultures are often considered "primitive" and "simplistic," particularly by literate cultures, both forms of culture are actually each highly organized and sophisticated. But, they each require and use distinct forms of organization and focus. Father Ong cites the following specific differences between how thought and expression are organized and articulated in oral and literate cultures:

Oral Cultures	Literate Cultures
Additive	Subordinative
Aggregative	Analytic
Redundant	Concise
Based on tradition	Unconventional
Close to human experience	More abstract
Situated within context of struggle	Less agonistic tone
Empathic, participatory	Objectively distanced
Strong focus on the present	Strong focus on the past
Situational frames of reference	More conceptual thinking

Table 1

Distinctions between thought, expression
and organization in oral and literate cultures

Most African countries are strongly based and steeped in oral traditions and culture, and as Father Ong points out, these oral cultures represent a very valuable and precise structure and organization that is quite sophisticated and elegant. While these African nations now function and communicate within the context of global politics as literate cultures, and while many of their citizens can read and write, many of their peoples still live and exist within the paradigm of the oral culture, and they cannot read or write. In addition, these African nations remain in many ways underdeveloped economically and technically. Many African villages are located in remote areas and they do not yet have electricity, or the ability to receive broadcasts from radio or television. This situation creates many tensions and difficulties for the governments of these African nations, because they must find ways to communicate many important messages related to the heath and welfare of their peoples to all the citizens of their countries, when not all their citizens can receive messages sent via modes of mass communication such as radio or television, and not all of their citizens can read newspapers, or mass distributed flyers or brochures.

Chris Ogbondah in his article, Old Wine in New Skin: The Utilization of Traditional and Modern Media in Communicating Medical and Health Reports to Rural Dwellers in Africa, (1996) has suggested a way for governments who face such difficulties in communicating with their constituents to combine modern technology that has been developed thanks to the contributions of literate cultures, with traditional forms of communication used in oral cultures to send important messages to those who might not otherwise receive them, or be able to understand them.

Ogbondah cites four major methods of communication that are used in Nigerian oral cultures to send messages to audiences such as tribes or villages. They are: drum language, gong language, masquerades (ritual dances), and puppet theatre. These are

forms of communication with which members of tribes and villages in Nigeria who still function primarily as oral cultures are familiar and that they trust. They constitute forms of communication that are culturally meaningful, and they can be accurately interpreted by the members of the tribes and villages.

Ogbondah suggests that the Nigerian government use these forms of communication in association with modern satellite and broadcast technology to send messages related to the health and welfare of the Nigerian people to the tribes and villages. Ogbondah also suggests that the Nigerians who still live and operate within the paradigm of the oral culture would be more likely to be able to relate to messages conveyed through means with which they are familiar, such as drum language, masquerade and puppet theatre, then they would some sort of anchor person or announcer speaking to them on a radio or television broadcast, or a mass distributed pamphlet or brochure.

Ogbondah's article raises several interesting issues that bear further investigation. One such issue centers around the fact that the four methods of communication in Nigerian oral culture that he cites, drum language, gong language, masquerades and puppet theatre, do not use spoken language to communicate their intended messages. They all rely, in several ways, on nonverbal components to communicate their intended messages. In addition, in many ways, these traditional forms of communication are really predicated on nonverbal communication, in particular due to their origins within oral cultures rather than literate cultures. It would be interesting then, to investigate further the relationship between these four methods of traditional folk communication, and nonverbal communication theories and concepts.

The purpose of this research paper is to:

1) describe and define drum language, gong language, masquerades and puppet theatre within the context of Nigerian culture and society; and

2) to theoretically frame drum language, gong language, masquerades and puppet theatre as forms of nonverbal communication.

A Description and Definition of Drum Language

Drum language ranges from simple signals that mean distress, or an alarm to gather a group together; to elaborately coded messages used in West Africa, as well as descriptive rhythmical arrangements that accompany public ceremonies and that function in the same way as verbal narration, but with greater ambiguity (Mead, 1977). The drum in traditional African culture operates as an unmuffled extending medium, and is skillfully built to reproduce tonal patterns of sentences through pitch, timber and volume (Ugboajah, 1972). The drum can be used to signal to others: danger in the community; an enemy invasion; the death of a prominent individual; the approach of foreigners; summons to take up arms; a declaration of war; or a call to worship. In Nigeria, the "talking drum" is used to convey socio-economic, geo-political and cultural information, especially through the "Juju" music of the Yorubas. Among the Yorubas the "talking drum" can be used to convey sometimes complex messages, especially during ceremonies in the palace of the "Oba" such as the "Olubadan" of Ibadan or "Oni" of Ife. Among the Yorubas the "talking drum" in "Juju" music can be used to convey messages about the different types of movements or choreography the drummer wants the participants to perform on the dance floor. It can also be used to alert or communicate to dancers that there will soon be a change in the tempo or pace of their performances.

Drums may range from small hand-held instruments to enormous barrel-size instruments, and they are made of wood and animal hides. The type of wood and hide used in their construction determine the dignity and tonal sound attached to the drum. They are distinguished on the basis of pitch, timbre and volume, and are used to communicate information at a distance by signaling or "talking." Different tones are created by striking the drum in different places, and with varying degrees of force. Initiation in drum language is practiced among the Kissi in Guinea and Diolas in Guinea Bissau (Rybak and Rosso, 1977). Like modern forms of media, drums are used to inform, educate and entertain.

Drums are used to transmit urgent messages from those who remain in the villages to those working in the fields. Drums are used to make public announcements to members of the community, and to ask supernatural beings and deities to maintain natural order and serenity in the community. They are also used to contribute to the general atmosphere of ceremonies and feasts (Rybak and Rosso, 1977). Among the Ibos of Nigeria, innumerable messages are transmitted by drum, without using the human voice (Doob, 1961). They are used for calls to worship, war, village or town meetings, etc. The "Atunpan" drum is used by Ghana Broadcasting Corporation as a "signature tune," while the "Pindo" and "Kyirem" are used to announce formal meetings and mysterious events respectively. The descriptive rhythmical arrangements of the drum function in the same way as the verbal narration, but with greater ubiquity.

Like spoken language, drum language is learned through both formal and informal educational processes. Formal training for drum language is conducted at various levels. One is at the family, or compound level, where children of the same lineage or

extended family gather informally at the family or compound "reception hall" to be taught how to encode and decode messages through drumming practice.

Formal educational training for drum language is also conducted at community, or private, arenas specifically built for the purposes of training in, and practicing, drum language. Some institutions of higher learning also offer drum language education through their music and mass communication departments.

Informal training for drum language takes place more as a recreational activity. For the most part, the format for this type of training is purely recreational. These lessons are often conducted by the older boys of the family or compound, and a lot of this training centers around learning the messages that are associated with the different tones and pitches of drums. In many communities among the Ijaws and Ibibios of the Southeastern people of Nigeria, drumming is a pass-time and after-school recreational activity. A lot of what children learn about drum music before the age of seven may come through this informal educational process. Anyone who is slow to learn during this process may incur a measure of scornful teasing from other youths in the family or compound.

How Drum Language Functions as a Form of Nonverbal Communication

Drum language is based upon "tonal patterns" that reproduce or replicate the human voice. There is not, however, a codified system of language that is broadcast through the beating of the drum. There is no alphabet, or a specific vocabulary, that is taught in learning drum language. There is no direct correlation between the sounds created by the drum and specific letters of the alphabet. Rather, the rhythm and tone of the drum replicates the human voice, and there is a certain amount of ambiguity in the messages that are sent via drum language. This aspect of drum language makes

it by definition a form of nonverbal communication, and not a form of language as we define it within the context of an alphabet that is used to create words that have interpretative meaning.

Mark Hickson and Donald Stacks, in their textbook Nonverbal Communication: Studies and Applications (1993) offer a basic definition of nonverbal communication that states that the: "nonverbal part of communication is that aspect of the communication process that deals with the transmission and reception of signs that are not part of natural language systems," (p. 5). Actually, the term "drum language" is somewhat misleading, because drum language is a form of nonverbal communication, and is not really transmitted through language per say. The signals that are broadcast through drum language are eventually translated into language, but the actual drum language signals themselves do not have direct linguistic correlates, as say, Morse Code, or sign language for the deaf.

In essence, drum language is a semiotic process, in which the tone and rhythm of the drum beats stand in place of language, but there is no direct or systematic relationship between a musical note created by striking a drum and a letter of an alphabet or a word in a language. This makes it by definition a form of nonverbal communication.

A Description and Definition of Gong Language

The gong is used for a number of purposes. It is sometimes used to get the attention of listeners prior to the dissemination of verbal messages to members of a community. It can be further used to reinforce important parts of a verbal message. In this respect the tone and rhythm of the gong in relation to the verbal message may be used to reinforce or underscore the importance of the latter.

Made from metal, gongs are an important medium of communication in rural parts of Africa where people live in close communities. The gongman, or gongwoman, are also called "town criers," and they are the news purveyors of the village. He or she is chosen not only because of his or her eloquence and delivery abilities, but also on account of his or her rhetorical and communicative skills and abilities. The gong is used to disseminate information from the community priest or other leaders. It is also used to disseminate information from various associations and organizations to members of the community.

At other times, the gongman or gongwoman serves as a liaison officer, providing a channel by which the views of the people may be expressed to the community leader (Ugboajah, 1972). He or she is a legendary figure, revered and respected for the credibility, authority and authenticity of his or her information. Like the network television news in the United States of America, the gongman's news is disseminated in the evening when community members are back from the fields. The exception is when there is an emergency or urgency ("news break") that would require the gongman to deliver information in the day time. Gongmen are the Peter Jennings, Connie Chungs, Dan Rathers and Tom Brokaws of their communities.

How Gong Language Functions as a Form of Nonverbal Communication

The gongman or gongwoman communicates with his or her audiences either directly through messages delivered through the gong, or through messages delivered through oral communication. In situations in which the message is brief, the gongman or gongwoman uses the gong to get the attention of villagers, then conveys the message through the gong. In situations in which the message is longer, or more complex, the gongman or gong woman uses the gong to get the attention of the

villagers, and to tell them to gather around, then the gongman or gongwoman delivers the message orally.

The gong functions in a manner similar to the drum. The gongs are generally small hand-held instruments, and they are made of different types of metals. The type of metal, and the size and shape of their construction determine the dignity and tonal quality that the gong produces. As with the drums, they are distinguished on the basis of pitch, timbre and volume, and they are used to communicate information at a distance by signaling or "talking." Different tones are created by striking the gongs in different places, and with varying degrees of force.

Gong language, as drum language, is based upon "tonal patterns" that reproduce or replicate the human voice. Again, there is not a codified system of language that is broadcast through the gong. As with drum language, there is no alphabet, or a specific vocabulary, that is taught in learning gong language. There is no direct correlation between the sounds or "notes" created by the gong and specific letters of the alphabet. Again, the rhythm and tone of the gong replicates the human voice, and there is a certain amount of ambiguity in the messages that are sent via gong language. As with drum language, this aspect of gong language makes it by definition a form of nonverbal communication, and not a form of language as we define it within the context of an alphabet that is used to create words that have interpretative meaning.

Hickson and Stacks basic definition of nonverbal communication cited above ("the nonverbal part of communication is that aspect of the communication process that deals with the transmission and reception of signs that are not part of natural language systems,") applies also to gong language, and again, the term "gong

language" is somewhat misleading, because gong language is a form of nonverbal communication, and is not really transmitted through language per say. The signals that are broadcast through gong language are eventually translated into language, as is drum language, but the actual gong language signals themselves do not have direct linguistic correlates either.

Gong language, as drum language, is a semiotic process, in which the tone and rhythm of the drum beats stand in place of language, but there is no direct or systematic relationship between a musical note created by striking a gong and a letter of an alphabet or a word in a language. A researcher could not transcribe the sounds created by the drum or the gong into their linguistic correlates. This makes them both forms of nonverbal communication by definition.

A Description and Definition of the Masquerade

Masquerades are carved images of humans, animals or imagined creatures. The masks or carved images are "worn" by individuals adorned and decorated with colorful apparels, including long sleeve robes, hand gloves and stockings intended to conceal the identity of the person "wearing" the masquerade. There are many types of masquerades at the village, town or tribal level that are performed by youths and adults.

There is a special relationship between masquerades and drums. While all drumming activities do not involve masquerades, all communication activities of masquerades involve drumming. The essence of the masquerade is its ability to communicate to its audiences nonverbal messages through drums.

The nonverbal communication skills of masquerades are learned formally during rehearsals or "prep schools" in the evenings in barns or fenced premises. A masquerade troupe may consist of one or up to a dozen masquerades, about half a dozen drummers, and about a dozen or more supporters and cheer leaders. Members of the village or community who wish to participate in a masquerade performance first go through a registration process in the same way students register for classes. The troupe meets regularly between 7 and 9 p.m. in a fenced premises or "school" for about six months. Through a formal learning process individual masquerades are taught the drum language (i.e. to associate particular volumes, pitches or sounds of drums with particular words or messages).

At the end of the training, or educational period, the journeymen masquerades have learned enough drum language to participate in well advertised performances at the village, community square, or arena. During these performances drummers communicate socio-political messages to the masquerades, who in turn communicate the same to the audience through choreography and other nonverbal gestures, but for the most part, not using dialogue or verbal messages. The masquerades may use such entertainment-oriented nonverbal modes to communicate object lessons about morality, sexuality, acts of bravery, and other human activities to members of the audience. Some masquerades may travel from community to community on well advertised schedules to communicate moral or other political messages/information through entertainment to members of those communities. They receive financial rewards/compensation from their audiences for their performances.

Some masquerade troupes may, however, not travel from community to community. Rather, they entertain in "residency," in parks or recreation centers in the towns in which they live. The masquerade is the center of attraction in these group performances, not only because of his colorful and sometimes frightening mask, but

also because of his dramatic style of dancing, singing and the moral messages that he delivers in his performances.

The masquerade's messages are conveyed through the choreography and style of dancing that he uses, and they can be punctuated with epigrams and idiomatic expressions, ending with object lessons that are talked about for months in the community. Among the Ikwerres, an ancient and nowadays, rarely staged masquerade, "Ogwuh," describes through mime, the techniques used to slay a beast that menaced the community for a long time. Through gestures and choreography skills, the "Ogwuh" masquerade can communicate an aggressive hunting or slaying technique more effectively than with words. In this way, "Ogwuh" had been effective in diffusing information about hunting and farming.

In some communities performing [arts] houses for the masquerade are built like Western film houses, and the person who performs the masquerade can achieve the same level of status in African villages that movie stars in contemporary Hollywood achieve.

How the Masquerade Functions as a Form of Nonverbal Communication

Since the Masquerade dresses in a colorful and dramatic mask and costume, and primarily uses mime to communicate with his or her audiences, it seems rather obvious that these are both forms of nonverbal communication, and hopefully, those points should not require much defense. What is of particular interest, though, is how the Masquerade uses nonverbal communication, and the types of nonverbal communication the Masquerade uses to share his or her message with audiences. Two aspects of the Masquerade's performance stand out as critical to the creation of the persona of the Masquerade and to the delivery of the Masquerade's message to his or

her audience: The mask and costume of the Masquerade and the use of dance and movement to tell the Masquerade's stories. These two aspects of the Masquerade's performance are defined by, and rely on, two specific forms of nonverbal communication: physical appearance and kinesics.

Hickson and Stacks (1993) indicate that physical appearance includes dimensions such as: body shape, body image, physical attractiveness, clothing, cosmetics, hair and accessories. Several of these dimensions explain how the mask and costume of the Masquerade function as forms of nonverbal communication. The first dimension of physical appearance that this essay explores is the concept of attractiveness. The mask of the Masquerade is created to exaggerate many features of the human face that range from attractive to unattractive in Nigerian culture. The appearance of the Masquerade's mask varies from person to person that fulfills this function in Nigerian culture. Some of the masks exaggerate pleasant features and some exaggerate ugly or gruesome features. The colorful mask and costume of the Masquerade indicate for audiences through nonverbal communication the general demeanor of the Masquerade (pleasant appearance = friendly; frightening or gruesome appearance = unfriendly).

The use of the mask and costume are forms of body alterations that also focus on the use of exaggeration to make the Masquerade stand out to audiences, and to assist in communicating messages nonverbally to the audiences of the Masquerade. The mask and costume of the Masquerade themselves hide the actual human features of the wearer, and alter and exaggerate the physical appearance of the Masquerade, creating a persona that is larger than life.

Hickson and Stacks also note several functions of clothing that are a part of physical appearance. As forms of clothing, the mask and costume of the Masquerade also signify a specific level of status that the Masquerade holds in Nigerian culture. The Masquerade is a revered figure, and has a higher level of status than others in Nigerian culture. The mask and costume of the Masquerade provide the wearer with an implicit form of power, just as police or military uniforms do for their wearers. The mask and costume of the Masquerade also impact the behavior of the individual wearing them. The anonymity allowed by the mask and costume frees the individual to perform the exaggerated actions and behaviors necessary to communicate messages to the audience.

Another form of nonverbal communication used by the Masquerade is kinesics, the science and study of movement. The Masquerade communicates with audiences, telling them specific stories, and sending particular messages, through movement and dance. Hickson and Stacks point out that kinesic communication varies according to culture, and this is an excellent example of that dynamic. Nigerians are trained to understand the dance and movement of the Masquerade, just as they are trained to speak the Nigerian language, and to understand drum and gong language.

Hickson and Stacks note several theories and studies that define and categorize the messages that can be sent through movement, and many of them could be applied to the dance and movement of the Masquerade. For instance, Birdwhistell's Linguistic Analogy Paradigm (1980) provides a system that establishes analogic relationships between kinesic behavior and language. His system is used to examine and define the structure of the movements studied, and then to use to that structure to interpret the meaning of the movement, much like building a sentence. It would certainly be

possible to closely study the dance and movement of the Masquerade using such a system.

At a more basic level, though, it is interesting to note how the Masquerade uses dance and movement to communicate specific stories and fables to the audience. Kinesics focus on the use of both body movement and facial expressions to convey messages, but because of the Masquerade's mask, the Masquerade is unable to use facial expressions to communicate with the audience. The Masquerade relies then only on movement and gestures to tell his or her stories. It is through the specific use of body position, posture, gestures, and movement that the Masquerade tells the tale. It is interesting to note that these forms of communication are really very ambiguous, and are open to wide ranges of interpretation within different cultural contexts, but that the Masquerade is able to communicate the same message to all audience members, primarily due to the specific standards of interpretation within Nigerian culture.

A Description and Definition of Puppetry

Puppets consist of painted, wood carvings of animated objects that depict humans or other creatures. Like masquerades, members of a puppetry troupe go through registration, paying fees like students registering for classes, to become members of the troupe. It takes between six months and a year to learn the art of puppetry in a fenced premises or "school." For instance, among the Ikwerre or Ogoni people in Southeast Nigeria, "rehearsals," or the educational process for the "Amanikpo" puppetry performance lasts between 7 and 9 p.m. in a fenced "school" or premises, and take place for three to four days a week. The purpose of night-time learning for puppetry is to conceal the secrets of the art or performances from the public. This is because the messages of puppetry shows are intended to be a surprise to the public.

Following the end of the learning period, dates and venues are advertised for the puppetry shows, just as movies or plays are advertised in the United States. During the shows, the puppets are hidden inside a six-foot high square wooden fence that is decoratively adorned with colorful sheets. One or more puppets show their heads from inside the fence at intervals to entertain the audience through gestures or body language that is understood by the public. Two or more puppets may entertain in a duet without speaking, and by their artistry and skills communicate moral and political information through mime techniques. The visible parts of the puppet, which are animated small-size heads on a screen of richly-colored African print, not only entertain, they also inform, educate and are used to make political commentaries on local and national issues.

It is important to keep in mind that although puppetry is used for entertainment, it also serves as a medium for communicating news and information and other serious messages. In Nigeria, "Amanikpo" and "Kwagh-Hir" puppetry are central to the social lives of Ogoni and Tiv communities respectively, and performances often last throughout the night (Bordenave, 1977). Among the Tivs, various communities stage their own "Kwagh-Hir" puppet shows, and thereafter, an inter-community competition during which the best is recognized. There are puppetry competitions among the Tiv people of the Middle Belt region of Nigeria, and a trophy is won by the best puppetry troupe just like the best casts win awards at the Oscars in the United States.

Puppet shows are well developed in many parts of Nigeria, where the art is taught. Puppet shows are usually accompanied by singing, and may cover mythological, historical, social, political and economic themes. Some forms are completely operatic,

while others contain stylized prose dialogues interspersed with singing. The shows may be performed at the village arena, school playgrounds, or during market fairs.

How Puppetry Functions as a Form of Nonverbal Communication

Puppetry relies primarily on the same forms of nonverbal communication that the Masquerade does to communicate its messages to its audiences: physical appearance and kinesics. The difference is in how these two nonverbal communication concepts are used to communicate with audiences. The puppets rely on costumes, as does the Masquerade, to establish for the audience, their specific persona and the specific role that they play in the drama that is to ensue. All of the principles of physical appearance alluded to during discussion of the Masquerade apply to the puppets, and perhaps then some.

All of the dimensions of physical appearance cited by Hickson and Stacks (body shape, body image, physical attractiveness, clothing, cosmetics, hair and accessories) are a part of the nonverbal messages created and delivered by the puppets. Body shape and body image are a significant part of the messages that are sent by the puppets nonverbally. Every culture has its own specific interpretation of individual personalities based on their physical appearance as defined by body shape and image. In the United States these paradigms are created mostly through television, film and advertising. Just by looking at the body shape and image of the puppets, Nigerians are able to interpret general personality types of the puppets.

Another significant dimension of physical appearance related to puppet theatre is the concept of attractiveness. Just as the mask of the Masquerade is created to exaggerate many features of the human face that range from attractive to

unattractive in Nigerian culture, so are the puppets. The appearance of the puppets varies depending on the characters that are played. Some of the puppets exaggerate pleasant features and some exaggerate ugly or gruesome features. The clothing, cosmetics, hair and accessories used by the puppets also convey specific nonverbal messages to the audience. Audiences are able to determine who puppets are supposed to be through these nonverbal dynamics. They can tell about such factors as the: economic level, educational level, trustworthiness, social position, sophistication, level of success, and moral character of the puppets through how they are dressed, the way their faces are made up, their hairstyles and their accessories.

Puppet theatre also relies on kinesics, or movement, to deliver their messages to their audiences. The puppets do not engage in dialogue, they use mime to tell their stories. Their movements are exaggerated, in much the same way that the Masquerades use movement to show audiences their stories. Audiences are then able to interpret these movements based on cultural values and knowledge. As in the case of the Masquerade, the puppeteers rely only on movement and kinesics to tell the stories to the audiences, because the puppets do not have articulated faces that can convey different expressions.

The head and face of the puppet present one particular visage to the audience. The puppets are unable to communicate with audiences using facial expressions, as say some of the Muppet puppets created by Jim Henson's production company, or other puppets created for feature films. Nigerian folk puppet theatre relies only on large movements and kinesics to convey messages to audiences.

Conclusion

These traditional forms of communication found in Nigerian culture present many interesting issues and questions. The tensions that exist between oral and literate cultures are embodied in these forms of folk communication in many ways. The roots of these traditional forms of communication in nonverbal communication provide many interesting insights into how these forms of communication function, and into how they are interpreted both within and outside Nigerian culture. Perhaps many people who live in western, literate cultures are not even aware of the existence of these traditional and folk forms of communication in oral cultures through out the world. As we seek to open doors between cultures and nations, it is important to understand how we communicate as cultures, and to respect and learn from the differences and similarities that we discover.

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